1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
AZ2 Andamans AZ2

175 During the next sixty years the islands remained unoccupied save by the aborigines. There were a number of wrecks in different parts of the islands, and in some cases the crews were slain. In 1839 a geologist, Dr Helfer, visited the islands in the hope of finding minerals, and was killed by the natives. In 1844 two transports, the *Briton* and the *Runnymede*, were wrecked in a cyclone on Ritchie's Archipelago, one of the ships being thrown high up over a reef into a mangrove swamp. The crew and soldiers were safely landed, and were eventually rescued with hardly any loss of life. As they were a large party they were safe from the possible attacks of the natives, and they lived on stores rescued from the wrecks.

In view of the number of wrecks that occurred on the islands and the desirability of establishing there some harbour where vessels might safely call for water or shelter from storms, the East India Company again considered the question of colonizing the Andamans. When the Company, at the end of the Indian Mutiny, found themselves with a large number of prisoners on their hands, it was decided to create a new Penal Settlement, and the site of the settlement of 1788 was chosen for this purpose, and renamed Port Blair.

175 The Penal Settlement was established in March 1858, and has been in existence ever since. The aborigines were hostile from the outset, and gave much trouble by their raids. They made a determined effort to oust the invaders from their country. To establish friendly relations with them an institution known as the Andamanese Homes was founded, to provide free rations and lodging, and medical attendance, to such of them as could be induced to visit the Settlement. Through the efforts of successive officers in charge of these Homes friendly relations were established, first of all with the *Aka-Bea* tribe in the neighbourhood of Port Blair, then with other tribes of the South Andaman, and at a later date with the inhabitants of the North Andaman and the Little Andaman. At the present day there is only one body of Andamanese still persistently hostile, and these are the so-called *Jarawa* of the interior of the South Andaman. These *Jarawa*, since about 1870, have made repeated attacks on isolated parties of convicts and forest

1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
AZ2 Andamans AZ2

175 workers and on the friendly Andamanese. Punitive expeditions
●648 have been sent against them on several occasions, and attempts to set up friendly relations with them have been made by leaving presents in their huts, and by capturing some of them and keeping them for a time at Port Blair. At the present time the *Jarawa* are as hostile as ever.

619 Although of one race throughout, the Andaman Islanders are divided into several groups, with differences of language and culture. There are two main divisions, which will be spoken of as the Great Andaman Group and the Little Andaman Group respectively. The Great Andaman Group includes all the natives of the Great Andaman with the exception of those of the interior of the South Andaman who are known as *Jarawa*. The Little Andaman Group includes all the inhabitants of the Little Andaman, those of the North Sentinel Island and the *Jarawa* of the South Andaman.

619 These two different divisions exhibit many differences of
197 language and culture. All the languages of the Great Andaman Group are closely related to one another. They have the same grammatical structure, and a large number of roots are the same in all or in several of them. In the same way the language of the *Jarawa*, so far as it is known, is very similar to that of the natives of the Little Andaman. On the other hand when the language of the Little Andaman is compared with the Great Andaman languages there is a very striking difference. Of a vocabulary of several hundred words collected in the Little Andaman there were less than a dozen in which the root or stem was clearly the same as that of words in the Great Andaman. While the grammatical structure of the languages of the two groups is fundamentally the same, this can only be shown in a somewhat detailed analysis, and there are many important differences.

619 With regard to technical culture the same grouping appears. There is a general similarity between all the tribes of the Great Andaman Group, while the *Jarawa* and the inhabitants of the Little Andaman have a technical culture of their own that is markedly different from that of the other division.

4: Guha E-5 (1948-1949)1953 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

Report of a Survey of the Inhabitants of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands during 1948-49

[P1]

By

B. S. Guha

Director, Department of Anthropology

About the end of the year 1946, Mr H. J. Stooks, Deputy Secretary to the Ministry of Home Affairs, consulted me with regard to proposals made by Sri A. V. Thakkar of the Bharatiya Adim Jati Sevak Sangh for undertaking work for the amelioration of the conditions of the inhabitants of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands on the same lines as the Sangh has been doing among the Bhils and other tribes of Central India. The problem of the Aborigines of the Andaman Islands, however, is not the same as that of the other primitive tribes of India. These people are some of the most ancient remnants of the human race still surviving in any part of the world, who had been very little affected from contact with other people and subsist principally on fishing and hunting. The need among them is not so much the spread of education and social uplift as the arrest of the decline in population which has been most alarming. Since the establishment of the Penal Settlement at Port Blair in 1858, the condition of the "Friendly Tribes" among these inhabitants have been most distressing. Due in the beginning to armed encounters with the forces of the Government, and also as a result of ravages from diseases like tuberculosis and syphilis contracted from Indian convicts, there has been a continuous decline in the Andamanese population. From an estimated figure of about 10,000 people in 1779 the tribe has been reduced to only 70 in 1931, and at the time of our visit there were probably not more than 37 individuals still living. Whether it will be possible to save the Andamanese from the fate of the Tasmanians whose last surviving representative passed away about 1770 is extremely doubtful.

The hostile branch of the Andamanese tribes known as the Jarawa-Onge-Sentinelese group, fortunately has been spared the fate of their more "friendly" kinsmen, and as a result of implacable hostility and comparative isolation have survived to a much larger extent. In the western forest belts of Middle and South Andamans, the Little Andaman, and the North Sentinel Islands they have resisted all intrusions from outsiders and were known to have lived in these places comparatively unmolested. No accurate census of these tribes however, was ever taken, but from estimates made by people who had some knowledge of the tribes, it does not seem possible that the total strength of these people could be more than a few hundred souls altogether before the last war. What has happened since and how far these people, specially the Jarawas, have suffered from Japanese occupation cannot accurately be determined. It is known that there had been some bombing by the Japanese in the Jarawa tract, but whether any Jarawa was killed is not known. I, therefore, suggested to Mr Stooks that an anthropological survey of the Islands was essential and a probable estimate of the surviving settlements of the population made before the question of any social welfare work can be considered.

114 while its culture was already in the process of disintegration. [161] Moreover, MAN dealt almost exclusively with the South Andaman [182] tribes, mainly with the Aka-Bea, while RADCLIFFE-BROWN's researches were centered mainly on some of the northernmost tribes. As a result, not all the tribes were given equal attention. This is regrettable since their religious concepts and myths were by no means uniform. Therefore one cannot say that our information about the ten Great Andaman tribes is as full and up to modern standards as would be desirable. There is, of course, no more hope of ever filling the existing gaps in our knowledge. It is the more necessary that the still relatively intact groups of Andamanese be thoroughly studied before it is too late.

Ongi (Onge)

161 The Ongi of Little Andaman owe their survival to their isolation [101] and to the fact that they remained hostile until the end of the 1880's [648] and even thirty years ago were not yet considered as quite reliable. Nevertheless, their numbers are constantly decreasing as the following estimates in the various Census Reports seem to indicate

1901 . . . 672
1911 . . . 631
1921 . . . 346
1931 . . . 250

161 Of course, these figures, being mere estimates, are not reliable, 114 and the last two are too low. As Professor LIDIO CIPRIANI of Florence, who spent many months with the Ongi in 1952, 1953, and 1954, kindly informed us, he came to different results. In his letter, dated May 2nd, 1958, he writes:

" I visited all communal huts with aim of taking a census of the Ongi. Every family has a bed in a communal hut, i. e. a kind of 'ritual' bed on which they marry and under which they are buried when they die. I prepared a list of persons using each bed. This added up to about 500 Ongi, but I saw less than 200 of them. The majority is still very shy and, when approached, ready to disappear into the jungle. The names of the absent persons were given to me by other Ongi. I left this list of personal names with the Department of Anthropology, Indian Museum, Calcutta, but kept a copy".

161 This would seem to indicate that the situation is not quite as bad as appears from the Census Reports. But even so, it is very serious and is constantly deteriorating. The Census Report of 1931 [164] says that "the numbers decrease year by year mainly from infection [182] such as influenza introduced at times of contact with civilization. Some septs have almost completely disappeared during the last years".

8: Heine-Geldern & Hohenwart-Gerlachstein E-4 (no date) 1958
AZ2 Andamans AZ2

In a recent paper Dr. N. DATTA-MAJUMDER, Director, Department of Anthropology, Government of India, writes:

"From a study of 34 Onge families contacted by us, it is found that the average size of the family is only 3.15. Thirteen families out of 34 are childless. That is, 38.2% of the married couples are sterile".

When, in 1946, proposals were made for undertaking work for the amelioration of the conditions of the inhabitants of the Andaman Islands along the same line as had been done among the Bhil and other tribes of Central India, Dr. B. S. GUHA, at that time Director of the Department of Anthropology, very reasonably observed that "the problem of the aborigines of the Andaman Islands is not the same as that of the other primitive tribes of India", and that "the need among them is not so much the spread of education and social uplift as the arrest in the decline in population which has been most alarming".

The Ongi have been in sporadic contact with the outside world for many years. They have been visiting Port Blair, particularly since some of them moved to Rutland Island on the southern tip of Great Andaman. This contact with civilization was bound to affect their material culture, as well as their whole mentality. We may again quote Dr. DATTA-MAJUMDER who says:

"As a result of this long contact the Onge have already come to appreciate a number of foreign articles, for example, tobacco leaves, tea leaves, sugar, matches, aluminium utensils and implements made of iron (especially bill-hooks and files). In order to secure these articles, they often barter away their valuable honey and shells. The afore-mentioned changes in material culture have at present touched only the fringe of Onge culture. But the demand for these articles (especially tobacco leaves and safety matches) is becoming so great that Onge culture is likely to be vitally affected in the near future".

Dr. DATTA-MAJUMDER came to the conclusion that "the hunting and food-gathering Onge culture, which had been an autonomous cultural system in the past, is now breaking down".

The Ongi were repeatedly visited by government officers, but the resulting information is paltry. PORTMAN spent several months among the coastal groups of Little Andaman in 1886 and 1887 and collected a few hundred words of their language. In 1901, C. BODEN KLOSS visited a group of Ongi on Rutland Island and one on Little Andaman, both only for a few hours. At some time between 1906 and 1908, A. R. RADCLIFFE-BROWN went to Little Andaman for several weeks and made a preliminary study of the Ongi language. In 1928, EGON VON EICKSTEDT spent a few weeks among the Ongi on Rutland Island and visited briefly several groups on the coast of Little Andaman for the sake of physical anthropological research.

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Jarawa

101 [197] [174] [648] [161]

Although the Jarawa inhabit the jungles of South and Middle Andaman, they do not belong to the Great Andaman group of tribes, but are culturally and linguistically related to the Ongi. It is assumed that they originally came from Little Andaman. The Jarawa owe their survival to their having remained isolated as a result of their implacable hostility toward the British (now Indian) colonial settlement. Information on their raids and the punitive expeditions against them will be found in the respective volumes of the Census of India. In 1931 their number was estimated at either 70 (BONINGTON) or 120 (HUTTON). Their culture conforms to the general Andamanese pattern, but differs in various respects from that of their former neighbours, the extinct Great Andaman tribes. Except for their communal huts and such of their material possessions as were found during punitive expeditions, practically nothing is known about it. Our knowledge of their language is restricted to lists of words col-

of their language is restricted to lists of words col- Our knowledge 119 648
lected from captive Jarawas by COLEBROOK in 1789—90 and by PORTMAN in the 19th century.

Research on the Jarawa would by highly desirable, but will be impossible as long as they remain hostile.

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Census of India, 1901, Vol. III, *The Andaman and Nicobar Islands*, by Sir RICHARD C. TEMPLE, pp. 4, 52—53, 68—90, 117—121.

Census of India, 1911, Vol. II, *The Andaman and Nicobar Islands*, by R. F. LOWIS, pp. 7, 31—39, 82—83.

Census of India, 1921, Vol. II, *The Andaman and Nicobar Islands*, by R. F. LOWIS, pp. 5, 39—43.

Census of India, 1931, Vol. II, *The Andaman and Nicobar Islands*, by M. C. C. BONINGTON, pp. 8—9, 15—16, 23.

A. R. RADCLIFFE-BROWN, *Notes on the Languages of the Andaman Islands*, Anthropos, vol. IX, 1914, pp. 38—39.
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North Sentinel Island

North Sentinel is an island of about 30 square miles west of the southern tip of Great Andaman. It has been briefly visited by Government officers on various occasions, but it seems that no contacts were ever made with the natives, except on December 27th, 1886, when the Ongi, who accompanied PORTMAN on his trip, "caught" some of them (Census of India, 1901, p. 92). From PORTMAN's report it does not become clear whether or not he saw these temporary captives himself. Our knowledge of the culture is restricted to a few observations on their material possessions. The communal huts differ from those of the rest of the Andamanese. The canoes differ from those of both Great and Little Andaman, but are more like those of the latter. The bows resemble those of the Jarawa and Ongi. On the basis of this it is assumed that the natives are related to the Jarawa and Ongi, but PORTMAN's Ongi companions are said to have found that the persons whom they had caught talked "an entirely different language". 101 131 648 197

In 1901 the number of the natives was estimated as 117. This estimate was based on the area of the island and the assumption that the density of the population was approximately the same as that of great Andaman in precolonial times. The figure was not changed in either 1911 or 1921. In 1931 the number was estimated as 50 "on conclusions arrived at from several visits during the last decade and after counting the number of huts found and the sleeping places", but it is said that this does not necessarily mean a decrease in population. "It is believed that the population is stationary, for 161

161 the Sentinel islanders have been kept free from direct contact with civilization".

114 181 [48] In the Census Report of 1931 it is said that the natives "like the Jarawas are entirely hostile", but no reason is given for this statement. Previous visitors found them exceedingly shy, but not hostile. When seeing foreigners, they simply fled into the jungle. M. C. C. BONIG who visited North Sentinel Island on the 10th of March, 1911, in the course of that year's Census operations, wrote:

"The people appear very timid and it seems not unlikely that if they are approached frequently with presents, they will become friendly of their own accord".

114 No information on North Sentinel Island more recent than the 1931 Census Report has come to our knowledge. If the situation has not changed since then, the culture of its natives should be completely intact and untouched by outer influences — a unique case among the primitive tribes of southern Asia. Here, therefore, is a truly ideal opportunity for anthropological research.

113 Census of India, 1901, Vol. III, *The Andaman and Nicobar Islands*, by Sir RICHARD C. TEMPLE, pp. 4, 92 (PORTMAN's visit).

Census of India, 1911, Vol. II, *The Andaman and Nicobar Islands*, by R. F. LOWIS, pp. 28—29 (BONIG's Report).

Census of India, 1931, Vol. II, *The Andaman and Nicobar Islands*, by M. C. C. BONINGTON, pp. 22—23.

A. R. RADCLIFFE-BROWN, *The Andaman Islanders*, 2nd ed., Cambridge, 1933, pp. 412—413, 422—423, 491—492.

9:Sarkar D-5 (1948) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Jarawa

The North Sentinel Jarawa

648 175 The taming of the South Andaman Jarawa has been a moot problem of the local government in view of their occasional raids on the forest camps and offices. On this score the North Sentinel Jarawa appear to have an important function. Nothing is known of the length of their isolation on this little island of about 15 square miles but it is probably unaffected by the punitive expeditions, that are undertaken from time to time by the local government against the South Andaman Jarawa. When BONIG and his party landed on the west coast of North Sentinel Island on March 9th 1911, they were not received with volleys of arrows, but instead the "eight men on the beach and another five in two canoes" disappeared in the jungle. The same was true of those seen previously on the east coast. [342] BONIG and his party visited some huts, which were of the lean-to type, and also went some miles inland without being troubled. BONIG therefore rightly concludes the following:

"The people appear very timid and it seems not unlikely that if they are approached frequently with presents, they will become friendly of their own accord. If this fails the small area of the island and the open nature of the forest would also make it easy to capture some, and after kind treatment let them go again".

000 As far as the present writer's knowledge goes this method has not yet been tried, but its utility lies perhaps in taming their South Andaman congeners. They could be made to settle round Port Campbell and other suitable areas on the west coast. A few communal huts built according to the plan and style of the South Andaman Jarawa should first of all be provided. They should be given all chances of expanding their population. Such an opportunity they are likely to seize if they suffer in any way from population pressure or from shortage of food and shelter. If their canoes are not seaworthy they should be provided with suitable water transport so that there may be frequent intercourse between the two islands.

The South Andaman Jarawa

114 Although no systematic ethnographic studies on the Jarawa have been undertaken, RADCLIFFE BROWN (1922) gave sufficient hints regarding the unity of the material culture of the Negritos as a whole. Physically they belong to the Negrito race, as can be seen from the few natives captured from time to time by the local government (SARKAR, 1952). The punitive expeditions 648 have also brought to light some important facts of their material culture.

342 Thus, during the punitive expedition of March 1911 (LOWIS, 1912) near Pap-lunta-jig a big communal hut was found which had been erected on the ridge of a hill and which measured 45′ × 30′ × 15′. It was raised high above the ground and was supported by a number of stout piles. The structure [184] was different from the Onge communal huts in that the floor was raised, while in the latter the floor is just the surface of the earth. The eves of the Onge communal hut touch the ground.

9:Sarkar D-5 (1948) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Jarawa

painted with red ochre. It was perhaps left there for drying. The Jarawa would surely have returned just for this bow!

It was a straight piece of wood tapering at both ends. The outer surface was convex and was painted red, while the inner one was straight and smooth, and showed criss-cross designs and indentations. We then went to look for a spring and found it at some distance behind a steep rock but there was no water then. It appeared that the Jarawa had left this camp some time ago.

We then left Spike Island and sailed for Yeratia Jig. Here an old kitchen midden was known to be another Jarawa haunt. No Jarawa was found even there, however. The kitchen midden was a mound strewn all over with animal bones. Fragments of typical Andamanese pottery and a blue stone bead were discovered there.

In recent years the Jarawa raids have been rather more frequent. GUPTA (1955) has given a list of them in his report on these people. It is believed that the primary cause of the restlessness of the Jarawa is the shortage of game and other food material [3]. On the other hand the tribe appears to have been sufficiently provoked by the punitive expeditions. All the Jarawa villages that the punitive party came upon were burnt down. In the encounter of March 1911 a woman was captured alive and nobody knows what happened to her afterwards. The pregnant woman captured along with four children in 1938 off Bluff Island later on gave birth to a boy (SARKAR, 1952, Pl. IX, fig. 3) at Port Blair but it was difficult to tame her. After her delivery she attempted to swim away and was rescued from the sea. She would spend hours climbing a cocoanut tree. Her whereabouts were unknown during the Japanese occupation of the Andaman Islands during the last war. The young children were sent to the Mission at Car Nicobar, where the present writer studied them in 1948. One of them had died before.

On the other hand the Jarawa raids, according to the then executive Government officers, are also very brutal. Before they go out for a raid the Jarawa cover their chests with bark armour and paint their faces with patterns of white clay. The bark armour is stitched securely on the body by other persons and can only be removed by cutting off the stitches. These people are in the habit of mutilating their victims. They take out their brains, their eyes, and their bodies are hacked all over. – The type of arrow they use is almost a spear, as may be seen from fig. 4. This arrow was obtained by the present writer from the forest department officers of Long Island in 1951. It was used injuring a bush police officer of the night picket unit at Lakera Lunta in January of that year. The police, in return, shot one Jarawa dead. The male nurse of the Long Island Hospital took the following body measurements of this dead man :

Height ... 5 feet 1 inch
Chest ... 36 inches

Fig. 4

[3] They have of late been reported from about the region of Bomlungta, Rangat Bay, etc. on the east coast of Middle Andaman. (The spelling "Ronga Bay" on the map is incorrect.)

9:Sarkar D-5 (1948) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Jarawa

726 141

Right arm ... 2 feet 4 inches
Right index finger ... 4 inches
Right toe ... 2 inches
Length of right leg ... 2 feet 11 inches
Length of right foot ... 9 ½ inches

726 411 177 The iron blade of the arrowhead is 17 cm long and 4.9 cm broad at the base. It is mounted on a wooden shaft 86.7 cm long. The barb at the base consists of an ordinary iron nail which is bent at its sharp end and fixed with bark threads impregnated with resin. It must have been obtained from a forest camp during some raid.

726 114 According to GUPTA (1955) the above mentioned incident was not a premeditated raid. He thinks – after a careful inquiry into the above incident – that the Jarawa "came out in the open, early in the morning and walked right into the camp and did not attempt to shoot, [which] would warrant a presumption that they meant a friendly visit".

648 Since the last few years the Andaman Government has not encouraged any punitive expedition among the Jarawa. This is also evident from one of the Senior Officer's opinion quoted above. The forest workers, on the other hand, still have to face the Jarawa. They think that since no punitive action is taken against them they are gradually getting bolder. It is reported that the Jarawa beat the trunks of trees within their hearing. Consequently all these buttress beatings are immediately reported to the higher authorities and armed guards protecting the forest workers are alerted. If that is the case then the Jarawa do not attack without a warning! But who knows what they really mean? Do they want to communicate with us? Or is it a means of communication among themselves?

The Jarawa Problem

648 114 It has already been hinted at the problem of taming the Jarawa. It was one of the special aims of the Government of India to arrange a substation of its Department of Anthropology. As a result of this the present writer visited the Andaman Islands twice and was of the opinion that the substation of the Department of Anthropology should be stationed at Long Island and not at Port Blair. There were no express plans but to carry out anthropological studies of the aborigines of the various islands. It has not yet been possible to census the friendly Onge properly (SARKAR, 1960).

000 The primary desideratum appears to be a knowledge of the native language. As far as the present writer knows, there is no one in the various Government departments who is acquainted with the Andamanese language, not to mention the other languages spoken on the varius islands. The Onge

[4] A Jarawa vocabulary was collected from the captive pregnant Jarawa woman by Mrs. CHENGAPPA and Mrs. CHAUDHURI, and it has been published by the Andaman Government.

9:Sarkar D-5 (1948) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Jarawa

language could have been learnt by now since they are friendly. There has not been any attempt to communicate with the Jarawa [4] through the medium of the Onge language, which could be tried with the help of loudspeakers installed at suitable places in reply to the buttress beatings of the Jarawa. Prior to this an aerial survey of the Jarawa villages or camps would be necessary. Some food, clothing or other such articles might be air-dropped during this aerial survey. Along with the articles to be air-dropped some pictures showing symbols of friendship, such as the Andamanese and the Onge way of sitting upon one another's laps, might be included. Some pictures showing the Indian manner of greeting one another, for instance that of saluting each other with folded hands, might also be considered.

The local government appears to be very much in favour of capturing the Jarawa alive and then letting them off with presents after kind treatment. Since the capture of the Jarawa from South Andaman is not an easy problem – as may be seen from the Census Reports of the last sixty years – we might try this method of approach with the Jarawa of North Sentinel Island, where such captures appear to be comparatively easier.

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10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

INTRODUCTION

A group of north-south running islands as they are, the Andaman Islands have as many as 204 small islands where the impact of civilisation and growth has been little and the human history has been one of stagnation rather than of chequered career. Being a land of aborigines, the foreign intrusion has been quite feeble though mention about these islands is found in the early records of the travellers. Though the knowledge about the islands is derived from the notes which date back to 2nd Century A.D., the contacts with the foreigners have been all the time transient and extremely feeble. Before the formation of the penal settlement, the islands have been known as an island of horror because of the presence of such tribal people who would eat up the man they encounter and as regards the wealth there has been imaginary illusion, sometimes being called as the Island of Gold. The historical record of the islands which can be built with a fair degree of precision is since the formation of the penal settlement. There has been the search for resources as well as their exploitation. However, all the attempts for finding minerals and the geological explorations have shown the possibility of the existence of some poor quality coal, copper etc. Virtually there has been a conspicuous lack of efforts for the development of the islands. The penal settlement which grew up in Port Blair did not have any considerable influence on the overall development of the islands. Nevertheless with the more intimate knowledge about the islands, the forest exploitation had increased and the land around Port Blair was cleared for agriculture. The little amount of agriculture that was started and fostered by the local-borns in and around Port Blair never expanded considerably and it remained confined to a few areas of South Andaman only. The aborigines were very much widespread and in the beginning they had exercised hostility and arrogance which had in course of time given place to a very friendly and amicable terms with some of the tribal groups i.e. the Onges and the Andamanese. The Jarawas, however, still now maintain their hostility and the attempts for bringing them under amicable terms have so long proved futile.

Nothing more deserves a special note in the islands than the aboriginal population. Because of the insular nature of the islands, the aboriginal population is considered to be one of the purest type though the foreign intrusion has brought about an extremely rapid impoverishment and decay only during the last few decades of contact with these aborigines.

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

563 is made lucrative by way of giving an additional allowance of 33.3% to the basic salary in the islands. The lack of social and cultural developments coupled with the remoteness of these islands still now provoke this apathy. Since the independence, the colonisation of the uprooted East Bengal refugees together with some people from South India is being implemented. An appraisal of the resources of the islands shows the possibility of the development of agriculture with rice as the staple crop, as is common to tropics and on account of the hilly terrain and the vegetative cover, the area of the agricultural development is not at all considerable but quite sufficient for 5000 families. Of all the three main islands, the North, Middle and South Andamans, Middle Andaman offers the maximum potentiality by virtue of the bigger area, presence of a number of river valleys and absence of any other settlement of the later settlers or aborigines. Next to it is the North Andaman and lastly the South Andaman though it seems to be the most lucrative of all the islands. The response of the refugees in the beginning of the implementation of such a programme has been poor which largely owes to the lack of knowledge about the islands, the long distance from the mainland and also due to their being a land of aborigines and penal settlement. However the improved knowledge and the personal acquaintance with the islands have proved a long way in dispelling those aweful ideas. A new chapter in the history of the islands has opened for such enterprises which aims at an all-round regional development simultaneously with the agricultural settlement.

563 For such a small group of islands the cultural diversity is quite conspi-
648 cuous arising out of the settlement of a heterogeneous group of people coming from different parts of India and also of some from Burma. Though circumstances have played a great role in bringing about a homogeneity, a precise observation shows their distinct characteristics. The aboriginal population has, however, become an object of academic study only and the few of them, the Jarawas, the Onges and the Sentinelese, who are surviving need a deeper intimacy with the civilised people but so far except the Onges such efforts have not proved successful. The penal settlement which ultimately gave way to the development of settlement in South Andaman did not prove very envigorating for the lack of Government help, co-operation and imbalanced sex-ratio. The demographic characteristics have been dealt in details in the chapter on the later settlers and show how much imbalanced it is for the successful growth of population. However the agricultural settlement of the refugees obviously paves the way for a healthy development of the population and

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

simultaneously with it a successful all-round regional development of the islands.

The resources of the islands having a small areal extent are very limited though the forest and sea products are fairly rich to deserve special mention. The presence of a variety of valuable species of timber in these islands has led to their exploitation since the development of the Penal settlement. The important species of timber found in the Andaman forests are padauk, garjan etc. In the previous decades, the forest exploitation was never associated with a commensurate amount of forest regeneration. Such policies are being followed at present for saving the forest resources from ruthless exploitation without any adequate means of ensuring a perennial supply of timber by systematic regeneration. The recent colonisation scheme has invoked the enquiry for the clearance of the forests. Andaman forests being rich in timber and also being the only major revenue earning source of the islands should by no means be ruthlessly cleared for settlement. Not only it depletes the forest resources but also degenerates the soil—the soil erosion being the immediate victim after such clearance of forests. Considering the primary importance of the forest resources of the islands, it seems to be a plausible agreement that at least 50% of the land should be reserved under forest cover and a further curtailment from this percentage will undoubtedly lead to serious consequences of the soil simultaneously with a great decrease in the resources of the islands.

The sea products range from a wide variety of products from sea shells to sea fisheries. The collection of sea shells is in vogue from a fairly long time and the sea fisheries, mostly being confined to the coastal areas, is conducted by the fishermen and the tribal people for their own consumption. There is a good deal of possibility for furthering the development of marine fisheries on a commercial scale but the lack of enterprise and capital investment has not given rise to any appreciable development. The only two enterprises of the fisheries are those of Trochus and Turbo shells by the Japanese during 1930-36 and another enterprise by a business concern in 1947. Even the present catch from the coastal areas amount to only 300 lbs., a considerable lag from the demand within the islands.

The means of earning livelihood in the islands were hunting and collecting by the aboriginal population who have not even to-day learnt the techniques of domesticating plants and also animals except the Onges who have domesticated the dogs very recently. The penal settlement and the subsequent expansion of the administrative seat at Port Blair

10:Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

(1) *The Period of Seclusion and Piratical Disturbances*

175 In this period of seclusion, people had some knowledge of these islands from the travellers, traders and sea-pirates owing to the central position of the islands on the trade routes of India, Burma and the Far East. The islands were inhabited exclusively by the aborigines. Mention of these islands dates back to the 2nd Century A. D. in the writings of Claude Ptolemy. The map referred to, in his writings, indicates the Islands of Buzacata to be in the place of the Andaman Islands and it is said that this island produces quantities of shells and the inhabitants go naked and are called Agmatae. It is believed that the Island of Buzacata means to refer to the Andaman Islands and such a peculiar name (Buzacata) has been achieved through the originality of the cartographer.

Later mentions of these islands are found in the collection of early Arab notes of the 9th Century on India and China which were translated by Eus. Renaudat and the people of the Andamans have been called Angamanians. Further mention of the islands is made by two Mohammedan travellers (Pemberton's General Collection of voyages and travels), Chinese Buddhist Monk I'Tsing (672 A.D.), Marco Polo (1286 A.D.), Friar Odoric (1322 A.D.), Nicolo Conti (1430) etc. From most of their writings it was evident that the islands were inhabited by very ugly brutes who would eat up any man whom they could lay hands on. Nevertheless, this was a land of riches and was named the "Island of Gold." An idea of the knowledge of these islands in the early days can be had from the notes of Marco Polo, a portion of which is quoted below.

"Angamanian is a very long island. The people are without a king and are idolaters and no better than wild beasts. All the men of this island of Angamanian have heads like dogs, and teeth and eye likewise; in fact, in the face they are just like big mastiff dogs. They have a quantity of species; but they are a most cruel generation, and eat everybody that they can catch, if not of their own race. They live on flesh and rice and milk and have fruits different from any of ours."

[648] These types of early notes by different travellers are largely written from second hand knowledge and tales current in the neighbouring countries of the Andamans viz. Malaya, Siam, etc. Mr. Portman[1] opines

[113] 1 Portman, M. V.—A history of our relations with the Andamanese.

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

that, "it should be remembered that it was to the interest of the pirates who made the Andamans a headquarters of their raids and also enslaved the aborigines, to exaggerate the real dangers they encountered and spread such tales regarding the Andamans as would keep them away." The islands have been ravaged by the Malay sea pirates from very early times. They used to come to collect shells and to carry on the slave-trade. These sea-pirates, through their exaggerated propeganda, made the islands a monopoly ground of their own and, in consequence, people used to know it as a land of horror. The slaves brought by the pirates used to find their way in the courts of Siam, Cambodia and Indo-China for many centuries, thus bringing about the deepest distrust and hostility on the part of the aborigines to all the visitors to the islands.

The name '*Andamans*' of the islands is a corrupt form of the name '*Hanuman*' or 'Monkey peoples', the aboriginal antagonists of the Aryan immigrants in India. In the earliest Hindu mythology, the *Ramayana*, these islands were believed to be a land of the *Hanumans*. Malayans used to refer to them as '*Handuman*' which is even a corrupt form of *Hanuman* and from Malay the knowledge about the Andamans first spread into the different parts of the world. Hence the '*Handuman*' has further evolved into '*Andaman*'.

(2) *The British Regime and the Period of Foreign Intrusion and Settlements Since 1788.*

Factual records of the history of the Andamans can only be had since 1877 with the steps taken by the British Government of India to found a penal colony in the islands. The disturbing activities of the Malay pirates and the frequent massacres of the ship-wrecked crews around the Andaman Sea necessitated the Government of India to form a penal colony in the islands. For the materialisation of such a proposal, Lord Cornwallis sent Lt. Blair and Lt. Colebrook to investigate into the possibilities of such a colonisation in the islands in the year 1788. In accordance with their investigations, the first settlement was established on Chatham Island* at Port Cornwallis (now Port Blair) consisting of a free colony. It was found that the North East harbour (now Port Cornwallis) was a better place for settlement because of its fine harbour and nearness to Calcutta. So, in 1792, the settlement was transferred

* Chatham Islands is the port of the Port Blair town and is a very small island.

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
(1788-1942)

175
648

to the spot but it had to be shifted again to Port Blair because of the unhealthy climate and in consequence high mortality rates in that region.

But this settlement prospered little and for the next 60 years (uptil the second settlement) we have got very scanty records of the islands. The few important events are that in 1824 the British fleet were appointed at Port Cornwallis before the First Burmese War in 1825. J. E. Alexander landed, in a very interesting way in the Little Andaman, south of the South Andaman.

In 1837 Dr. Helfer, a Russian Geologist, was murdered by the aborigines while he was making expeditions into the islands in search of gold. In 1744 happened the queerly coincidental wrecks of the ships 'Runneymede' and 'Briton' bound for Calcutta with troops from Sydney and Gravesend respectively and there were various attacks on the troops by the Andamanese.

This period of great mishaps, shipwrecks and other disturbances made the government anxious. Fortunately for the British Government, this period synchronised with the Sepoy Mutiny in North India in 1857. Again a comprehensive report was submitted for making the islands a penal colony and in March 1858, the Andamans entered into second phase of its history as a penal settlement with the first lot of prisoners, 200 in number, and the mutineers of the Indian army who for the first time attempted to overthrow the British rule in India. They were accompanied by Dr. J. P. Walker. But the number increased to 773 within 3 months but 292 of them or 37 p.c. had escaped, died or were hanged.

Very strict measures were taken by Dr. Walker to deter these convicts from escape. But the administration of Dr. Walker was further weakened by frequent attacks of the Andamanese and this culminated in the Battle of Aberdeen on the 14th May, 1859. Dudh Nath Tewari, an escaped convict, who lived long with these aborigines, warned the settlement of the attack to be made in the Aberdeen, the heart of Port Blair, and as such proper steps were taken by the settlement to fight against the Andamanese. The escaped convict was released for his timely service.

Colonel J. C. Haughton (Oct., 1859) took the charge after Dr. Walker and he was a very loving personality amongst the convicts. He adopted a very humane method of treatment of convicts and established friendly relations with the Andamanese. In 1861 the administration of the Andamans was transferred from the control of the Government of India to the Chief Commissioner of Burma.

Colonel Taylor (1862) also adopted humane methods. 149 acres of land had been cleared for cultivation and there were some 3000 convicts

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
(1788-1942)

175
648

in the settlement by 1864. In this period Lord Napier of Magdala visited the islands and suggested certain reforms. The Government of India sanctioned a grant for the formation of the "Andamanese Home" which aimed at improving the relations of the civilised people with the aborigines.

In 1863 General Man took the charge when the number of convicts increased to 8873 and 3000 acres of land were cleared, 876 acres of land were brought under plough and as a result health conditions improved and death-rates fell appreciably from 10.16% to 1.2%.

General Steward (1871) followed General Man and devoted himself to the agricultural developments of these islands and while on a visit to the Andamans he was murdered by a convict at Hope Town on the 8th February, 1872. In this year the administration was first raised to the rank of Chief Commissionership and the Andaman Regulations of 1874 were drafted, placing the settlement judicially under the Government of India, instead of under the High Court of Calcutta, and making provisions for the release of the life time convicts after 20-25 years of penal servitude if they showed good conduct.

General Steward was followed by Colonel T. Cadell, who was here for 13 years and attempted the great economic development of the settlement. The Forest Department was opened and the foundation of the Cellular Jail was laid down, though it was completed in the year 1905 and the recruitment of the labourers was made from the convicts only. The Cellular Jail claims to be the biggest masonry building in the Andamans, situated on the sea-coast.

Sir Richard Temple (1894-1903) also did many constructive works such as the considerable enlargement of the Phoenix Bay dockyard and workshops, and the initial arrangements for the reclamation of South Point—Aberdeen Swamps were completed in 1918.

Later came Colonel Douglas (1913-20) and the first suggestion for abolishing the penal colony was forwarded by him. A forest colony was started in North Andaman Division which had to be closed down due to the general trade depression and the most remarkable achievement was the plantation of cocoanuts over several thousands of acres which afterwards formed a source of large revenue.

Colonel Beadon's tenure (1920-23) marked a change in the administrative policy. Only 1400 Mapilla rebels and some Punjabis were received as convicts and the general convict strength fell from 11,532 to 8823. Unmarried women convicts and also some categories of male

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
(1788-1942)

175
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convicts were sent back to India. The convicts were provided with many facilities and they were also treated leniently. The cocoanut plantations developed by Colonel Douglas were made over to some private enterprises. Beadon contemplated various reforms and changes in the administrative policy of the Government, but failed to translate them into action due to the shortage of funds. The local-born association was started under the Presidentship of a Government Gazetted Officer for their welfare.

Colonel Ferrar (1923-31) possibly brought about the greatest changes in the island and with the closing of the penal settlement, schemes for colonisation and developments were necessary. The settlement in the Andamans had grown up in and around Port Blair in the South Andamans and everywhere the ephemeral huts of former times were giving way to well constructed two storied houses of sawn timber and iron roof, with stair cases, glared windows and other amenities. The old period of 10 years on probation as a labouring convict was abolished and after a few months' stay in the Cellular jail all the convicts found themselves placed on a wage basis and freed from the necessity of wearing convict dresses. During this time the willing convicts were allowed to go back to the mainland to bring their wives and families to the Andamans for permanent settlement. Many of the convicts, of course, returned back to the islands with frustrated mind as they were not recognised by their societies and families in the mainland to which they originally belonged.[1] All these changes in the administrative policy had their impact on the rural and urban population. In spite of the above cases, there was a rapid increase in the number of women and children in the Andamans and the social structure gained greater stability as regards the sex ratio, and this was probably a stepping stone to the successful approach towards colonisation.

A new deep-water jetty was built up at Chatham and was connected with the main island by a wooden bridge. Malarial swamps around the harbour were filled up by dredgers. A match factory was also built up at a cost of 3½ lakhs of rupees. Hence the period of Colonel Ferrar is a period of achievement when probably new life was infused into the people of the Andamans and had its effect on the all-round development of the South Andamans.

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1 Bonington, M.C.C.—Census Report, 1931.

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Nicobars AZ7

(3) *The Japanese Regime.*

Under such circumstances of smooth development in the Andamans, the World War II darkened the horizon and no other part of India was so badly affected by the war as were the Andamans. The Japanese Army landed here on the 21st March, 1942 and had these islands under their occupation till 1945. This period was really a reign of terror and tales relating to the extent of their terrorism can be heard from the people with first-hand knowledge. In the beginning the relations of the Japanese with the local people were quite amiable. But a few instances of treachery committed by the people to contact the British Government in their attempt to overthrow the Japanese rule changed their relation to a bitter one. Hundreds of local borns were killed on the least suspicious by the Japanese Government. Naval blockade prevented supplies from outside and the Japanese were the pioneers in making the Andamans self-sufficient. From high Japanese officials to menials, all people were compelled to cultivate lands in order to achieve self-sufficiency at home. They cultivated all the available lands including hill slopes where they grew sweet potatoes and tapioca. The Japanese are also believed to have bombed over the Jarawa areas and surely they killed some. On the 8th October, 1945, the S. E. A. C. took the surrender of the Japanese garrison at Port Blair and immediate steps were taken for the rehabilitation of the surviving population who were famished and ill-clad. The civil administration was re-established on the 7th February, 1946.

Although the Japanese regime was a reign of terror, they at least showed the proper channel to develop the islands. They attained self-sufficiency in the Andamans, constructed 22 miles of road and tried for proper defence of the islands and developed industries based on local raw-materials. Whatever criticism may follow regarding such steps taken by the Japanese, it is to be believed that such isolated islands must follow this channel for their economic development.

(4) *Post-Independence Period.*

Since the 15th August, 1947 the Andaman and Nicobar Islands have shared independence with India. They now constitute the only 'D' class 'State' of the Republic of India, ruled by a Chief Commissioner directly nominated by the Indian President. Because of the meagreness of population adult franchise is not in vogue here and as such there is no representative from the Andamans in the Indian Parliament, but there is only one representative to the Parliament from the whole of the Andamans and the Nicobars nominated by the President of India. In the Andamans a local advisory

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

CHAPTER VII

MINERAL RESOURCES

135 The mineral resources in the Andamans were believed to be bountiful. There had been mentions in the earlier notes of many travellers and historians (e.g. Nicolo Conti) about the richness of the islands in gold and they have gone so far as to call these islands as the "Island of Gold". But unfortunately no gold has yet been found in the Andamans nor is there any reason to suppose that it will be found. In this [648] connection it may be recalled that Dr. Helfer, a Russian Geologist was killed by the aborigines while he was making geological prospecting in search of gold. M. V. Portman discovered specimens of various minerals in the neighbourhood of Port Blair and they are chromium, copper, iron and sulphur. As such the land seemed to be sufficiently promising and Mr. Mallet[1] proceeded to Port Blair for further investigations. But unfortunately no important deposit of any mineral has been found to occur except some nests of lignite and bands of pure limestone in scattered places and in the serpentine rocks specially in the northeast part of Rutland occur small crystals of bronzite.

A few miles south of Port Blair near about Rangachang, highly altered and eruptive rocks are found being traversed by veins, the main constituent of which is hematite, but which consist of a considerable portion of pyrite (iron pyrites) and chalcopyrite (copper pyrite) in much smaller quantity.

Of the above-mentioned minerals, none are found to be economically exploitable. It has been argued that the Andamans cannot be rich in minerals because the Arakan Yoma of Burma also shows a barrenness in minerals and the only ores which need be noticed for practical purposes are those of tin, iron, lead, copper, antimony, none of which save iron, are known west of Sittang. But the apparent barrenness of the Arakan hills, however, can not be taken as conclusively proving that the Andamans are equally unproductive. It is believed that the Japanese carried out a full mineral survey of the islands and are reported to have found deposits including coal, iron and precious stones.

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[113] 1. Mallet, F. L. On some of the mineral reasources of the Andaman Islands in the neighbourhood of Port Blair, Rec. G.S.I. Vol. XVII, 1884.

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Negaitos

food lie in a chain running from north to south along the islands between Little and Great Andamans. This has been one of the most convincing proofs of the movement of the aborigines from the south to the north. Cipriani writes, 'All these organisations, with geographical names, camps, places for water and food, indicate an ancient navigating experience moving from the south to the north. About a century and half ago the Jarawas are said to have still been in possession of canoes and the same is said of the savage inhabitants of the North Sentinel Island less than 50 years ago. In a surprisingly short period the technique of making canoes seems to have been completely forgotten as a result of the difficulties of using them."

THE ABORIGINES OF THE GREAT ANDAMAN GROUP

Andamanese, as they are called, were the most widespread and the largest in number. They had split up ultimately into a few sub-groups from the north to the south. The different groups are *Aka-kora, Aka-boa, Aka-jeru and Aka-bea.* There has been a deplorable decline in the number of these aborigines who in the bygone ages exceeded all other groups in number. At present the number is only 23, a considerable reduction from the number 625 only in the beginning of the 20th century. Though the present importance of the Andamanese because of the extremely poor number is far from significant, they are of no small interest for the study of the anthropologist, especially the impact of these people with the later settlers.

The consequences of the impact of the outsiders on the Andamanese have been far from satisfactory. With the formation of the penal colony, the aborigines continued to develop feud and on the 14th of May, 1959 a clash between the aborigines and the Govt. occurred which is known as the Battle of Aberdeen. Aberdeen is at the heart of the town of Port Blair. Efforts of pacifying these aborigines were made and for bringing them into closer terms of amity, the 'Andamanese Home' was started in 1863 by Rev. H. Corbyn Chaplain. They were employed for working with the convicts taught to speak English and wear clothes. The consequence of such an impact has been alarmingly devastating because of the infiltration of a number of vices and diseases which only paved the way for their impoverishment and decay (For further particulars see demographic characteristics).

2 Cipriani, L — On the origin of the Andamanese, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Census of India, 1951.

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Negritos

105 177 182 For the fact that the Andamanese inhabits the coastal areas of the Andamans, the fishing is an well-known art to them. The pristine culture is virtually lost and the few who are still now surviving have been brought under the folds of government help. Still now the headmen [225] [480] of the Andamanese in the Middle Andaman, *Loka* is found doing turtle hunting in their canoes and climbing up the coconut trees without the help of any rope. Still now they are found dancing in groups but they are few and far between. All of them wear clothes and live in the huts made by the Forest Department.

THE ABORIGINES OF THE LITTLE ANDAMAN GROUP.

101 The Onges, the Jarawas and the Sentinelese belong to this group.

The Jarawas

177 ●648 [101] [181] Of all these three groups, the Jarawas only live in the Great Andamans and their occurrence in the Great Andamans has been explained by many authorities, as has been explained earlier. The Jarawas are implacably hostile and the best of efforts to bring them under terms of amity have proved furtile. Lt. Colebrook and Archibald Blair first came in contact with the Jarawas and in course of time, the Aka-beas, belonging to the Great Andaman Group, living in the South Andaman became friendly with the foreigners while the hostility of the Jarawas remained unabated. The Jarawa hostility has been always increasing and it was more so since 1921. In 1923, 37 Jarawas were shot and in 1938, a Jarawa woman and her 4 children were captured. So the chances of meeting the Jarawas have been few and far between and the great decline in their number has in all practical senses stopped the apprehension of their raids in the new settlement areas. Still now, of course a person penetrating deep into the forests of the eastern parts of South Andaman should always be on the guard against an attack from the Jarawas.

The Onges.

The Onges, having experienced the impact of the foreigners at the latest period, are at present the most widesprend of all the aborigines of the Andamans. They do not have the truculence of the Jarawas and the attempts for bringing them under closer ties and terms of amity with the foreigners have proved successful, though the essential traits of their social, cultural and material life remain unaltered.

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Onge

The contact of the Onges with the outsiders can only be traced since the efforts of M. V. Portman[1] to establish a friendly relation with these tribes from 1886 onwards. However the earlier contacts with the Chinese and Japanese were possible because these people used to frequent the shores of Little Andaman for collecting the valuable shells and the Onges used to be engaged by them as divers and in reciprocation they were given presents of alcohol and opium. In the initial stage of the attempt for establishing a friendly relation by Portman, the Onges proved themselves hostile which was evidenced from the poor fate of the crews of a ship 'Assam Valley' when it touched the shores of Little Andaman and it was through the great efforts of the punitive expedition led by W. L. Much that the dead bodies of the crews were recovered. Later on, a few Onges, all on a sudden, arrived at Cinque Island and were captured by M. V. Portman. Only 9 of them were detained and the rest 15 were released. These few captured Onges were closely observed and studied in Port Blair by Portman and were ultimately returned back to their native land, Little Andaman. The friendly treatment and the presents that these Onges had received from Portman, paved the path of establishing friendly relations with the Onges much easier and also made the subsequent visits of the foreigners much more welcome. After Portman, a few more contacts were made with the Onges by Prof. Lapicque in March, 1893, during the operations of 1911 and 1921, undertaken by Eicsktedt, a German anthropologist, in 1827, by Dr. B. S. Guha, Ex-Director Anthropological Survey of India in 1948 and by Lidio Cipriani, an Italian anthropologist in the year 1954 and in a few succeeding years. Still the knowledge about the Onges seems to be meagre.

Living exclusively in the Little Andaman and a few of them in the Rutland Island, the Onges live in groups on a septal basis with clear-cut boundaries of hunting group for each group. There is no permanent habitation or village of the Onges in any part of the Little Andaman and their huts are of two types—(a) the permanent type of communal hut called *bera*, and (b) the temporary type of shelter called *korale*.

The abundance of food and water has made the life of the Onges comparatively easy-going. All the groups are headed by a leader and each group is assigned a fixed territory. The community life seems to be extremely democratic in character which entertains and also maintains a perfect individual freedom and only in times of necessity, advice.

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1 Portman, M. V—History of one relations with the Andamanese.

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

162 The population of the Andamans, on the other hand, is now almost entirely of recent immigration: there are no Europeans permanently resident, but a large number of colonists of Indian, Burmese or Malayan origin have made their home in the islands. In the Indian census of 1931, the entire stable population of the Andamans and Nicobars was assessed at thirty thousand, 18,962 in the Andamans and 12,069 in the Nicobars, not counting the Shom-Pen. The few aboriginals remaining in the Andamans are anthropologically of extreme importance. Classified among the Negritos, or Asiatic pygmies, they are one of the few surviving groups of pygmies who in the past were widely scattered all over the world. They can be divided into three groups, clearly distinguished one from the other by their mode of life, their present genetic isolation (although they certainly all originated from a common stock) and their attitude towards outsiders:

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1 The Arioto, the friendly Andamanese, once very numerous along the coast of Great Andaman and now reduced to only twenty-three individuals of pure stock; now almost completely sterile, they are near to extinction. They manage to survive only because of the help given to them by the Indian Government, which has established small camps along the coasts of Middle Andaman.

2 The Jarawas, still implacably hostile to foreigners, living a nomadic existence in South and Middle Andaman. One solitary group occupies a tiny island thirty miles west of South Andaman, surrounded by seas so stormy that they are frequently impassable. This is known as North Sentinel, to distinguish it from South Sentinel, twenty miles to the south and uninhabited. Landing on North Sentinel, as indeed penetrating anywhere on Great Andaman, has hitherto always entailed vicious fighting with the Jarawas, who are determined to repulse any stranger from their last refuge. They are well sheltered by an unbelievably dense forest, which has so far made it impossible to subdue them, though there are today probably no more than two hundred surviving.

3 The Onges, sole inhabitants of Little Andaman, into which they have withdrawn. There are not more than five hundred surviving today, and these are in a state of serious demographic decline. It is probable that before 1952 no one had ever approached their camps in the interior of the island. Until the present day, they

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

have always been protected by the sea, which is almost invariably rough, and by a thick tropical forest which extends without a break over more than a thousand square kilometres, unpenetrated by outsiders and almost impenetrable.

THE ARIOTO

The decline of the Andamanese began with the first landing of foreigners on the island and is similar to that of so many other primitive peoples who have come into contact with civilization; a detailed account of their decline would be long and pitiful. In the case of the Andamanese, however, demographic influences arising thousands of years ago must also be taken into account. Cut off by circumstances into small groups and separated at random by large expanses of sea or by the impenetrable forest, they gradually developed somatic and cultural differences of the greatest scientific interest. Among other things, languages became modified to such an extent that members of different groups are unable to understand one another. The Onges, for example, who in my opinion are the nearest relations of the Jarawas, are quite unable to understand their language.

The peoples of Great Andaman were the first to encounter civilization, when from 1858 onwards the Indian Government, then in English hands, decided to institute at Port Blair a penitentiary for the many political prisoners after the famous 1857 mutiny. Subsequently the government sent over convicts serving long or life sentences. The life of the deportees was atrocious during the first few years, owing to malaria and the absence of medical supplies. To the majority, therefore, deportation to the Andamans meant a death sentence. Even today the only large brick building in the Andamans and Nicobars is the penitentiary at Port Blair.

Before the building of the penitentiary the English had made several desultory expeditions to the Andamans, and even before then other foreigners had landed on the archipelago. It is known that Marco Polo, probably passing within sight of the archipelago in 1292, gave it the name of Angaman, and declared the inhabitants to be ferocious cannibals with dogs' heads. As a result, even the Asian pirates were for centuries afraid to land on the islands. The barbarous forays of Arab slave traders later awoke in the islanders

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Arioto

a furious aversion to foreigners. This hatred has been rekindled during the last hundred years by a number of unfortunate incidents, but at one time the islanders were favourably disposed towards seafarers passing by, if we are to believe Niccolo dei Conti and Cesare Federici, fleeting visitors to the islands in 1440 and 1569. They both wrote of the peaceful native canoes that approached their ships, and this is confirmed by other travellers, like the Italians Fra Odorico da Pordenone in 1332 and Giovan Francesco Gemelli Caresi in 1709.

Violent clashes with the coastal tribes only became frequent when the English began to take an interest in the Andamans as a possible penal colony. The first prisoners to be sent there were some Indians, in 1788. In 1796 the colony was abolished owing to the swift death of nearly all the prisoners from tropical diseases. The attempt was repeated in 1858 after a mission entrusted to F. Mouat, and this time the seeds of decline for the islanders were sown. Efforts were begun to approach the coastal peoples, and even, strangely enough, those of the forests, the now ferocious Jarawas. Some of these tentative overtures were well received, but once the islanders came to think they had been betrayed it was enough to rekindle the hatred of strangers which they have retained ever since.

The evidence obtainable from archaeological excavations shows that for thousands of years the people encountered by the English in the coastal areas were the sole inhabitants of Great Andaman, living by fishing rather than by hunting or cultivation in the forests. The Jarawas arrived later. Migration from Little Andaman, imposed in relatively recent times by lack of food, brought them to Great Andaman. Since the entire coastal region was already occupied, the new arrivals took refuge in the forests of the hinterland. There they were happy, for they found an abundance of wild honey and fruit which amply fulfilled their needs. A spontaneous equilibrium was established between the coast-people and the forest-people, and both prospered.

The arrival of an appreciable number of foreigners in 1858 immediately changed the situation. The peoples of the coast, who were the most anxious to make friends with the strangers, paid for this fatal error with virtual extermination. When the foreigners had definitely established themselves, the coastal Andamanese – *Arioto*

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Arioto

in the local language, as opposed to the people of the interior, the *Eremtaga* – appear to have numbered between six and eight thousand. Over the years their place has been taken by more than thirteen thousand foreigners, most of whom were deportees, enjoying relative liberty as servants of government officials, farmers and foresters. The settlers, voluntarily or involuntarily, introduced the islanders to alcohol and tobacco, forcing them to turn to the foreigners in order to satisfy their craving. In the famous and extremely frank work of the English explorer M. V. Portman (*A History of our Relations with the Andamanese*, Calcutta, 1899) official letters are reproduced which give precise instructions in the matter to government officials. The result of these instructions was to transform the Arioto into alcohol and tobacco addicts. Syphilis was passed to the native women by the deportees, and from them to their men. When, a few years after the mass importation of prisoners, the government authorities became aware of the infection among the Arioto, not one of them had escaped. The miserable twenty-three survivors of the eight to nine thousand of a century ago show the ultimate result only too well, and their final extinction is imminent.

Before the advent of the new civilization, the Arioto had divided up into at least ten distinct communities, but without any true tribal organization. They respected a form of chief, chosen by tacit consent for his personal qualities rather than by name or by birth-right; but the chiefs acted merely as paternal advisers, to be respected in times of trouble, with no illusions of authority. No one commanded, and none obeyed: all were content to follow the whim of the moment, with no conception of social obligation.

When the foreigners arrived, there were five main groups of Arioto on North Andaman, the Cari, Chede, Cora, Jeru and Tabo. Another five groups were in South Andaman, the Balawa, Bea, Bogig-iab, Joi and Col. With the numerical decline of the Arioto, who had always been endogamous within their group, a tendency arose for the survivors to merge and inter-marry, so that the twenty-three alive today are in fact the result of the mixing of the northern and southern Arioto, and of these with Indians and Burmese. The chief of these twenty-three individuals is Loca, a name in itself an indication of this ethnic mixture. Loca means 'whiskers', and he himself has a moustache, whereas pure Negritos have no body or facial hair.

THE ANDAMAN ISLANDERS

has a moustache, whereas pure Negritos have no body or facial hair.

THE JARAWAS

For obvious reasons I was unable to carry out any studies on the Jarawas. Apart from a restricted area around Port Blair, on the east coast of Great Andaman, the whole island is a tangle of tropical vegetation, in many places impenetrable, or at most passable only by hacking a way through. A few roads radiate from Port Blair, but none penetrate more than twenty kilometres or so from the township. To the north of the town is a well-maintained police cordon that stretches right across the island from east to west to prevent infiltration by the Jarawas; those in the south were all rounded up some time ago. Only beyond the cordon do the Jarawas maintain their rule over the virgin forest almost unchallenged. Like all the Andamanese they are Negritos, small in stature and extremely dark skinned. Obsessed by a fierce hatred for anyone outside their own group, enemies even of the other Andamanese, they roam through the forest with their deadly arrows. Shot from their powerful bows, their dagger-sharp arrows penetrate deep into the body of the victim – they can transfix a man's chest. The bloody skirmishing which has gone on for the last hundred years shows no signs of lessening even today.

The Jarawa ferocity increased as the result of grave mishandling of the situation by the foreigners. In this connection the following sentences from Portman's *History* may be quoted: 'On our arrival the Jarawas were quiet and inoffensive towards us, nor did they ever disturb us, until we took to continuously molesting them by inciting the coastal Andamanese against them. After a few years of this disturbance, the life of the Jarawas became very hard and in retaliation they began to attack us.' As the author in part recognizes, 'It was our fault if the Jarawas became hostile'. This was a fundamental error. Petty pilfering committed in perfect innocence by the Jarawas, ignorant of Western ideas of individual property, led to vicious punitive expeditions. To this end fire-arms were given to the hereditary enemies of the Jarawas, the Arioto. Elated by their unexpected power, they at once began slaughtering any Jarawa within sight, and enjoyed themselves hugely.

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Jarawas

Portman, who was for a long time the English administrator in the Andamans, is one of the greatest authorities on the islands; in his excellent history he refers, with frank sincerity and detail, to the methods adopted in the anti-Jarawa wars. He tells of the payment of the Arioto with food, tobacco and alcohol, arms and ammunition for their ruthless fight against their forest kin. Since at one time the struggle seemed to the outsiders to be lacking in ardour and intensity, Portman received an order in 1884 to deprive the Arioto of all provisions, starting with food. This he was forced to obey, perhaps unwillingly. He certainly loved the Andamanese, and he understood and honestly appreciated their needs.

As he later did on Little Andaman, Portman then tried to approach the Jarawas; not on Great Andaman where they had become too dangerous, but on North Sentinel. He proposed to improve upon the work already initiated (with disastrous results) by Homfray who went to the island in March 1867, escorted by police and by a small group of Arioto. The hostility between Andamanese from different localities immediately made even the Sentinellese keenly resentful of the foreigners who were trying to make friends with them under the protection of their age-old enemies. The foreigners would in fact probably have been quite well received if they had not taken Arioto with them.

Homfray referred to naked men on the beach who fled with loud cries into the forest when pursued by Arioto. Portman repeated the same mistake. In his photographs, still to be seen in the Indian Museum at Calcutta, he actually uses the expression 'Hunting Jarawas' among the captions to the pictures he took on North Sentinel.

After several abortive expeditions by Portman, visits to North Sentinel were very few and far between until recent years. In 1926 a German, whose name became anglicized to Bonington, an intelligent timber merchant at Port Blair, became a government official in the Andamans once he had assumed British nationality. He reports having seen some Jarawas, who rapidly disappeared into the forest uttering such wild cries that they hardly seemed human. In 1953 other Indian government officials approached the island, and a lone Jarawa on the beach threatened them with an arrow. I myself planned to make a landing on 20 April 1954, but was prevented by a rough sea. I went right round the island, but no Jarawas appeared.

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Jarawas
Onges

This was a pity, as I knew that my Indian and Burmese companions were ready to run any risk with the prudence they had already shown in Little Andaman towards the Onges. Since North Sentinel is flat and its forest not impassable, a peace mission led by men accustomed to dealing with people like the Andamanese, though it would certainly need more than a brief stay, would probably be ultimately successful.

My sole source of local information on the Jarawas was the wife of a government official, who had tended a pregnant woman and four children who were captured during one of the punitive expeditions on Bluff Island. She gave me a great deal of useful information, and indeed the greater part of our scanty ethnographical and linguistic data on the Jarawas has been obtained through her.

THE ONGES

Until 1952 the attitude of the various groups of Onges was very similar. Along the coast, however, they had already had some contact many years ago with a limited number of outsiders. Compared with the Jarawas they have been uniquely fortunate among surviving primitive peoples in that their extremely fertile territory has remained immune from invasion. In this they have been helped by their geographical isolation as much as by their own ferocity. Indeed Little Andaman, surrounded by an ocean that frequently turns into the proverbial boiling cauldron, presents grave risks to anyone trying to land. I had considerable experience of this myself; on many occasions I nearly gave up when the boat was overturned by giant breakers. On one occasion on the south coast of the island we were flung into the sea, and the empty boat capsized and dragged me down. No one was in a position to come to my rescue, but the momentary relief of an enormous return wave enabled me to extricate myself. The previous day the breakers had crashed down one after another and smashed us against the coral reef which runs right round Little Andaman. Our baggage and provisions had disappeared, and until help arrived we were forced to remain for two gruelling days without water or food, with no protection from the sun and in constant danger of being attacked by the Onges.

During the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Onges

During the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries there have been many attempts by outsiders to land on Little Andaman, but until recently none have gone beyond the coast, and the interior of the island remained unknown until 1952. Several people were drowned in the tremendous breakers, and a few were killed by the aboriginals. The last (undocumented) incident, involving Chinese sailors in search of water on the west coast of the island, appears to have taken place in 1949. There are no records of any attempt to land before 1825, when an English naval officer, T. E. Alexander, managed to do so, and was the first to report, in England, the existence of a fierce tribe of naked Onges. The encounter was bloody, as were many afterwards. Rumours (erroneous) were spread of cannibalism, as some English sailors who had managed to save themselves saw their companions being torn to pieces by the Onges: their hands, feet, legs and arms were cut off and the living remains were thrown into a great fire. This was, in fact, not cannibalism, but the satisfying of a superstition, already recorded by various well-known authorities on the Andamans, such as Portman, Radcliffe-Brown and others, that the spirit is immortal and stays by its bones. The spirit of an enemy could thus become a disturbing influence, which is to be avoided by totally destroying the living body with fire, so that the spirit flies with the smoke towards the sky, where it remains.

175 648 ● 175 648 975

Some time after Alexander, various English officials tempted providence in Little Andaman[1] and finally, on 24 July 1885, Portman landed, and began intensive efforts to pacify the Onges. Well protected by a police force, he was the first man who had the courage to pitch camp on the coast of Little Andaman. For most of March 1886, he stayed in the north of the island, and then between 28 October 1886 and 21 January 1887, he went slowly right round the island, starting from his camp at Bumila Creek. In the same year, two officials of the Indian Cartographic Service sailed round the entire coastline of Little Andaman; the resulting survey was, however, very imperfect. Portman returned for a brief visit to Bumila Creek in March 1887. This time there was a serious incident with the Onges, culminating in the severe wounding of an English

175 648

[1] Homfray, 1867; Stewart, 1873; Homfray and Stewart, 1874; Cadel, 1880; Cadel and Portman, 1880; Portman, 1880 and 1882; Man, 1883; various abortive landings, 1884 and 1885.

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Onges

colonel who had accompanied him. After a series of similar incidents involving other people Portman went to Bumila Creek on 10 November 1891, for revenge. A number of Onges, including the one responsible for wounding the colonel, were captured and taken to Port Blair.

Other visits by various people followed, always very brief and always limited to the coast, but there were no landings of note. Various expeditions visited the coast of the island for a few days and even made contact with some of the Onges, but the interior of the island remained as unknown as before. In February 1951 I accompanied one of these expeditions, which again did not go beyond the coast. Those five days on Little Andaman were most revealing, and enabled me to plan the landing I subsequently made in 1952. I saw that the island was teeming with game, that wild fruit and edible roots were plentiful, and that the sea round the island was full of fish, lobsters, huge crabs and turtles. Moreover, the turtles laid eggs in the sand where it was very easy to find them by following the beasts' tracks. I realized that it would be unnecessary to bring in provisions, and that it would be possible to enter the forest unencumbered with anything more than guns, cartridges and a few cooking utensils. Every day during this short stay I went with a police escort as far as possible into the forest in order to reconnoitre. In some places I noticed recent traces of small bare feet, but no Onges appeared.

Realizing that mobility was essential for any expedition into the interior of the island, I prepared at Port Blair a number of small watertight metal boxes to hang from the shoulder, to take a minimum of necessities. The largest items in my own personal baggage were a mosquito-net, a very light hammock and note-books. Cartridges were to be divided among the boxes. Tents, camp-beds and other large equipment would have to be left in a base camp, which would be established on the coast and left under police guard with radio transmission apparatus for communication with Port Blair. If necessary, a portable radio could follow us.

Several factors made me want to return. There was the mystery of the unknown interior of the island. There was the prevailing lack of information of any kind about the Onges, even of their numbers. I wanted too to carry out an investigation of their somatic characteristics, using the greatest possible number of individuals.

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

The continual fighting between the Eremtaga and the Arioto led, as we have seen, to the gradual disappearance of the communal huts of the latter as being too vulnerable. Subsequently, the conflict still going on between foreigners and Jarawas completed the destruction, so that there are now no communal huts on Great Andaman. The ever-increasing violence of the punitive expeditions against the Jarawas put an end to their numerical recovery during the last fifteen years or so, and there may indeed now be none left. Today only their kitchen-middens, and the surviving Onges, remain to show us how the Jarawas must have lived.

The Jarawa middens are distinguishable from those of the Arioto by their inland position and by their content of freshwater shellfish and land gasteropods, not eaten by the peoples of the coast.

Like the kitchen-middens of the Onges, those of the Jarawas contain human bones clearly interred in graves, and not scattered among the refuse. This refutes the Arioto accusation against the Eremtaga of cannibalism, and that of the people of South Andaman (now vanished) against the people of North Andaman and the Onges; the remains of cannibal feasts would undoubtedly have been found among kitchen refuse and not carefully buried in the ritual manner, with the graves filled in with earth. And the Jarawas and the majority of the Arioto buried their dead in the communal huts, continuing a custom which originated while they were still on Little Andaman. In time variations arose, but this does not alter the evidence in favour of migration in ancient times from the south, via the Nicobars and Little Andaman.

The differences in culture between the islands can be explained by the ease with which primitive peoples forget. The Jarawas, for example, although they reached Great Andaman by sea from Little Andaman, forgot in a few generations the art of hollowing canoes when they were forced to live in the depths of the forests, far from the sea. Today, they have been free from the Arioto for some time, at least on the west coast, and have access to the sea, but they have not started building canoes again. In other things, however, such as burial rites, the Jarawas kept faithful to the old Onge customs; their middens show the same exhumation of the bones, the same cleaning, and tinting with ochre, and careful reburial.

The general similarity of the middens in Great and Little Andaman cannot be due to chance. Animal food, for example, has clearly

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AWI India
Andaman AZ2
Nicobars AZ7

A ●648 It may be noted that some Burmese politicians periodically put forward a vague claim to the Andamans, whether on geomorphological or penological grounds is unknown.

N 131 161 563 2. *The Nicobars*

This group extends from about 6 to 10° N, Car Nicobar lying 75 miles from Little Andaman, Great Nicobar 91 miles from Sumatra. Of the 19 islands 12 are inhabited; Great Nicobar, with 133 sq mls, had in 1931 only 300 people; several islands run to 40–60 sq mls and Car Nicobar (49 sq mls) had the largest population, 7492. The greatest density, 205, was on Chaura, which supported 615 people on 2·8 sq mls: as we shall see, Chaura is of very peculiar significance. All these figures are for 1931, when the total population was 10,240; by 1941 it had risen to 12,452. Of these perhaps 200 belong to the Shompen, a jungly inland tribe ('pre-Dravidian'?) on Great Nicobar, and traders and officials number perhaps 500. The rest are Nicobarese proper, whose affinities seem to be with the Mon-Khmer peoples of the Indo-Chinese Peninsula.

N 133 311 The basis of the islands is formed of (? Tertiary) soft micaceous sandstones and clays, but there are extensive slightly raised coral flats. None of the islands is very high, but Great and Little Nicobar are very much dissected and forested; the others are mainly covered with tall *lalang* grass or coconuts, and abandoned coconut groves around Great Nicobar tell of a former larger population; conflict with the Shompen is apparently responsible for this abandonment.

N 132 311 262 With extreme temperatures of 65–98° F and a rainfall of 90–170 ins. (more on Great Nicobar) conditions are ideal for the coconut, and with fish and imported rice it forms the staple diet. "In a rich man's household often as many as 300 coconuts are consumed in one day. Some 200 of these are used in feeding the family's many pigs in the jungle."[84] The Shompen practise a primitive agriculture with fire-sharpened digging sticks, though they also obtain iron *dahs* (Burmese choppers or knives) by raid or trade from the coastal villages.[85]

N [438] N 175 Dutch pirates and French Jesuits had contacts with the islands before the Danish East India Company took on the task of 'civilisation' in 1756. The British occupied the islands during the Napoleonic wars, but spasmodic and rather inept Danish efforts at colonisation and evangelisation continued until they admitted defeat in 1848: the chief relic of their interest is the herd of half-wild buffaloes on Kamorta. In 1867 and 1876 Prussians and Austrians made gestures towards developing the islands, which in the intervals were used by Malay pirates (led by a deserter from the Royal Navy) who concealed their activities by only attacking ships actually calling at the islands and by leaving no survivors: they seem to have been responsible for the ill-deserved Nicobarese reputation for ferocity. Finally in

[84] 1931 Census, Vol. III, 74. [85] *Ibid.*, 87–88.